

Design and Access Statement

Land Adjacent to 1 Arnold Close,
Hitchin,
Hertfordshire.
SG4 0QQ

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Architect: Paul Buckthorpe – JK Design

1. Introduction:

This Design and Access Statement relates to a planning application for a new dwelling on land adjacent to 1 Arnold Close, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 0QQ. Permission was previously granted for a 2-bed dwelling in 2018 – at ref 18/03081/FP – and subsequently varied in 2020 via S73 application 20/01667/S73. This application seeks to renew that approval with some minor variations to the design, including the addition of study/bedroom 3. The increase in home-working since the house was originally designed makes this additional study space particularly crucial. We have also sought to update the proposals with a range of new energy efficiency, BNG and eco-measures which fit with modern standards and regs.

The Design and Access Statement should be read alongside the drawings and all other information submitted as part of the application.

2. Location:

The existing house – 1 Arnold Close – is at the end of a terrace of four existing houses in the Poet's Estate area of Hitchin – a sustainable location within walking distance of the station, local schools, parks and the town centre. The estate contains a mixture of different house types, and the terrace is built of red brick with concrete roof tiles. The main road through the area is St Michaels Road – and Arnold Close is a cul-de-sac off this main road.

The terrace faces roughly north-west, with south-east facing gardens, fenced with close-board fencing. The existing houses all have their own parking provision with a garage and a parking space each, and these plans will not affect the parking provision for the existing house as, in a change from the original application, we have acquired the section of land opposite which has ample space for 2 parking spaces and additional amenity space for the new property (this was included as parking for the existing house on the previous application).

The total site area is c. 294sqm – compared to 211sqm in the original application – thanks to the additional purchase of the land opposite for parking and amenity.

As mentioned, this is a highly sustainable location – with the train station only 5 mins walk away, adjacent to a bus stop and with the town centre a short walk or cycle away. There are also multiple local amenity and community spaces within a short walk, a range of highly rated schools both primary and secondary, and the local college next door. Hitchin itself is well-located both for commuting into London, and to road connections to the rest of the

country via the A1 and other motorways, and via both Luton and Stanstead airport under an hour away. It is also a vibrant and popular place to live – a historic market town with fantastic cultural and leisure facilities.

3. The Brief:

We sought pre-application advice via enquiry 26/00505/GEN and received a very helpful response, the advice from which we have followed. Namely, in line with that advice we have retained stepped ridge heights lower than that of no. 1. We have also not sought to detach the new property, and have instead made some small modifications to the original attached design.

Accordingly our brief was to create an updated design, drawing on the intent and design of the planning already granted, utilising and incorporating the additional land purchased for the new parking area and additional amenity space. As previously approved, the brief was to design an attached house with associated landscaping and parking, to extend and match in with the existing terrace.

4. Proposed Design:

We are proposing to modify the plans presented in the S73 to create a 3-bed attached house, in a style and materials that match closely with the existing terrace. As mentioned above, since the original application an additional piece of land opposite has been incorporated into this site allowing for parking directly opposite the property. Therefore the existing garage and parking remains with the existing house.

The proposed design, like the approved scheme, continues to directly reflect the style and design of the existing terrace, providing a development which will be in-keeping with and subservient to its surroundings. The design and scale is also in-keeping with the wider residential context. All materials will be similar to the existing house, and are specified on the plans, whilst the new addition will provide an interesting variation to the existing street scene.

5. Materials:

We have confirmed the materials on the plans so that there should be no need for a pre-commencement condition around materials.

6. Parking provision:

We have confirmed all of the details previously requested in the S73 relating to the parking on the plans – namely:

- New vehicular access from Arnold Close – new dropped kerb shown on plans, application started with Highways but they have advised they require live planning permission to approve - case ref 2897752- 102001923485.
- Surface water discharge arrangements – none required as permeable driveway will be installed.
- Access arrangements to the proposed dwelling – access from pavement shown on plans.

Therefore we hope there should be no need for any pre-commencement conditions in relation to this.

7. Ecological Enhancement Plan:

In addition to the additional planting to meet our BNG commitments (detailed in the BNG documents) we have a range of other measures that we will introduce to make the development as ecologically friendly as possible – please see attached Ecological Enhancement Plan at Annex 1.

8. Energy and Sustainability Statement:

In addition to the BNG planting and ecological enhancements outlined elsewhere, we are taking a fabric-first approach to ensuring the build is eco-friendly. We are also including renewable energy and water conservation measures. Please see attached Energy and Sustainability Statement at Annex 2 for more details.

9. Construction method statement:

All works will be carried out according to the construction method statement attached at Annex 3.

10. Hard and soft landscaping plan:

Hard and soft landscaping – including areas for bin storage and cycle storage – will be provided as per the attachment of Plan HSLP1 at Annex 4.

11. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

This was not a requirement when the previous applications were submitted, and will no longer be required as of 31st July when small sites are exempt from BNG. However this application is being submitted before then so please find attached documentation at Annex 5 in relation to BNG – Plan HSLP1 includes planting of 7 additional saplings to meet our 10% uplift requirement.

In-keeping with the fruit trees already present on this amenity area, these will be a selection of small native apple, pear and cherry trees. These trees will fit into the space available, and complement the existing planting. Fruit trees of this nature will both attract a wide range of bees and pollinators, and provide food and habitats for a myriad of other wildlife. The area will not be fenced off so that the trees can be enjoyed from the pavement.

In considering this Katie-Anne Florez acted as the competent person to carry out the assessment. The competency as Small Sites Metric (SSM) user is aligned with definition set out in the British Standard 'Process for designing and implementing biodiversity net gain: BS 8683:2021'.

She has relevant experience having worked on multiple developments since 2019 - designing thoughtful and effective landscape plans. She also has relevant training via the Open University Neighbourhood Nature module - providing basic scientific and observational skills to discover the plants and animals in the local neighbourhood. Competency is determined with reference to The SSM (Statutory Biodiversity Metric) User Guide which states the following: *The developer is responsible for selecting the competent*

person for completing the SSM. The competent person does not need to be an ecologist for the SSM. The Local Planning Authority does not need to verify the competent person.

The relevant attached documentation comprises the Biodiversity Gain Plan report, the SSM Statutory Biodiversity Metric spreadsheet and the pre- and post-development site plans – which can all be found at Annex 5. These were completed using the best-in-class Joe's Blooms digital BNG tool. The additional planting is also shown on the separate hard and soft landscaping plan – Plan HSLP1.

12. Contamination:

Please see Phase 1 contamination report by Danny Fisher from Adeptus attached at Annex 6. As you can see no contamination risks were found, and therefore no further work is required in relation to contamination.

13. Conclusion:

As you can see we have considerably enhanced the original approved proposals in terms of biodiversity, energy-efficiency and sustainability. Like the original scheme, as noted in the original officer's report, such a development would respond well to the local context and be sympathetic within the local built environment. It would appear subservient to and in-keeping with the existing properties on Arnold Close. The proposal would result in no unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene and should therefore be considered to be in compliance with both local and national planning policy.

Therefore we hope that this proposal to create a new end of terrace double-storey house will be considered a residential windfall site, in-keeping with the context, and therefore acceptable.

LIST OF ANNEXES:

ANNEX 1 – Ecological Enhancement Plan

ANNEX 2 – Energy and Sustainability Statement

ANNEX 3 – Construction Method Statement

ANNEX 4 – Plan HSPL1 – Hard and Soft Landscaping Plan – see separate file

ANNEX 5 – BNG Documentation – see separate files

ANNEX 6 – Phase 1 contamination report – see separate file

ANNEX 1

Ecological Enhancement Plan:

Project: Construction of a Single Attached Dwelling

Site Address: Plot Adjacent to 1 Arnold Close, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 0QQ

Prepared By: Katie-Anne Florez - JBK Estates (Southern) Ltd

1. Introduction & Project Description

This Ecological Enhancement Plan has been prepared to support the planning application for the erection of a single new dwelling on the plot adjacent to 1 Arnold Close, Hitchin.

The development comprises the construction of one attached house with associated parking and landscaping. This plan aims to secure biodiversity enhancements in accordance with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan.

2. Background

The plot is an area of garden and amenity land, largely turfed, with existing trees that are being retained, and additional planting planned to meet BNG requirements. There are no negative ecological impacts of the development.

3. Planned ecological enhancements

The proposed scheme would include the following enhancements – to be in place pre-occupation:

- Rain-water harvesting for water conservation and use in garden watering
- Hedgehog tunnels in fences
- Swift boxes/bricks
- Insect hotels

ANNEX 2

Energy and Sustainability Statement:

Project: Construction of a Single Attached Dwelling

Site Address: Plot Adjacent to 1 Arnold Close, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 0QQ

Prepared By: Katie-Anne Florez - JBK Estates (Southern) Ltd

1. Introduction & Project Description

This Energy and Sustainability Statement has been prepared to support the planning application for the erection of a single new dwelling on the plot adjacent to 1 Arnold Close, Hitchin.

2. Background

The development is a single attached dwelling, extending an existing terrace of four houses of standard construction. Previous approved plans did not include additional measures to ensure the energy efficiency and sustainability of the project – therefore this statement has been prepared to support Policies SP9 and D1 of the North Herts Local Plan.

3. Additional PV panels:

This design incorporates 6 x 530W Aiko Solar panels on the back slopes of the roof to provide up to 3 kWp of fully renewable power. This system is more comprehensive than that which is required by the rules, providing an additional 2 panels above what is required.

The system would provide an estimated annual carbon saving of 350-500kg, generating a predicted 2600-3000 kWh of electricity annually – both helping the environment, and providing the inhabitants with up to £500 savings on their bills annually.

The panels would be flush panels, removing the need for additional bird-proofing and maintenance. The system fitted would be expandable – meaning that future inhabitants could add batteries over time to make use of even more efficient use of green energy from the sun.

4. Other planned energy efficiency and eco measures:

These include:

- Additional insulation in the floor vs requirements – 200mm Celotex or equivalent.
- Wall insulation will be via 150mm cavity filled with Rockwool 32 or equivalent – with 250mm loft roll in the roof.
- Low-flow plumbing fixtures to conserve water.
- Zoning control on heating to ensure rooms are only heated when needed – with under-floor heating downstairs utilising the thermal mass of a concrete floor to slowly and evenly release heat.
- 25mm argon-filled, active-coated, double-glazing to reduce heat loss through the windows.

ANNEX 3

Construction Method Statement (CMS)

Project: Construction of a Single Attached Dwelling

Site Address: Plot Adjacent to 1 Arnold Close, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 0QQ

Prepared By: Katie-Anne Florez - JBK Estates (Southern) Ltd

1. Introduction & Project Description

This Construction Method Statement has been prepared to support the planning application for the erection of a single new dwelling on the plot adjacent to 1 Arnold Close, Hitchin.

The development comprises the construction of one attached house with associated parking and landscaping. The site is small and located in a residential area, therefore particular care will be taken to minimise disturbance to neighbouring residents.

The works will be carried out by competent and experienced building contractors - we manage Health & Safety on-site via all relevant legislation, standards and best practice.

2. Site Access & Construction Traffic

- Access to the site will be taken directly from Arnold Close.
 - All construction vehicles will leave the site in a forward gear where possible.
 - A banksman will be used when required to assist with vehicle movements.
 - Deliveries will be timed to avoid peak residential traffic hours where practicable.
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3. Construction Site Compound & Storage of Materials

- A secure site compound will be established within the curtilage of the development plot (as far as practicable from neighbouring boundaries).
 - The compound will include:
 - Temporary site office / first aid point / spare ppe / welfare / refreshment facilities
 - Storage area for materials, plant and equipment
 - Protective fencing (Heras or similar) around the compound and working area
 - All materials will be stored neatly within the compound and not on the public highway.
 - Skips and waste containers will be located within the site compound.
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4. Construction Vehicle Parking Area

- Dedicated parking for contractors' vans and cars will be provided within the site compound on the new parking area.
 - Active loading/unloading will be done as quickly as possible - with the aim of taking maximum 20 minutes.
 - The contractor will instruct all staff and subcontractors to park considerately and not to obstruct access to neighbouring properties.
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5. Tidy site and environs:

- All debris will be kept within site boundaries and the site itself will be kept as tidy as possible.
 - Pressure washer will be used to clear any mud and debris from the road.
 - The road will be swept regularly to keep Arnold Close clean.
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6. Hours of Working

No construction works, including the arrival and departure of delivery vehicles, shall take place outside the following hours:

- Monday to Friday: 08:00 – 18:00
- Saturday: 08:00 – 13:00
- Sundays and Bank Holidays: No working

These hours comply with the recommendations of North Hertfordshire Council for residential areas. Noisy operations (e.g. piling, breaking out, use of breakers) will be restricted to 08:30 – 17:30 Monday to Friday where possible.

7. Additional Management Measures (for information)

- Dust suppression (water sprays, sheeting of materials) as required
- Noise control (quiet plant where possible, turning off engines when not in use)
- Waste management (segregated skips, licensed carriers)
- Emergency contacts and site rules will be displayed on site

ANNEX 4

Plan HSLP1 - Hard and Soft Landscaping plan - see separate file:

File name: *1 Arnold Close_PlanHSLP1_v1.pdf*

ANNEX 5

BNG documents – see separate files:

Biodiversity Gain Plan report: *1 Arnold Close_SSM_011d_report_V1.pdf*

SSM Statutory Biodiversity Metric spreadsheet: *1 Arnold Close_SSM_011d_v1.xlsx*

Pre- and post-development maps: *1 Arnold Close_SSM_011d_map_V1.pdf*

ANNEX 6

Phase 1 contamination report - see separate file:

File name: *1 Arnold Close_Phase 1 contamination report.pdf*